

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01 NEA-10 EUR-25

SY-07 M-03 A-01 AID-20 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00

DODE-00 PRS-01 OMB-01 INRE-00 RSR-01 /134 W
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P 261103 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8537

S E C R E T RABAT 1302

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MO US

SUBJECT: BENHIMA VISIT

REF: STATE 052911

1. REFTEL RECEIVED AFTER STATE 053281, WHICH SEEMS TO ANSWER QUESTION RE SUBJECTS BENHIMA PLANS TO RAISE. KENITRA COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED BETWEEN THIS EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT AND BENHIMA LIKELY TO REPEAT PREVIOUS GOM VIEW RE NEED FOR GREATER QUID PRO QUO; BENHIMA WILL PROBABLY ASK FOR MORE ECONOMIC AID UNDER LESS COMPLICATED PROCEDURES; WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE MAY HAVE IN MIND ABOUT MILITARY ASSISTANCE , EXCEPT TO ASK FOR MORE; HE WILL PROBABLY WANT USG TO ENCOURAGE US PRIVATE INVESTMENT HERE.

2. UNSTATED AND MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT ON BENHIMA'S MIND, WE BELIEVE, WILL BE OVERALL QUESTION US- MOROCCAN RELATIONS, AND KING' S NEED FOR REASSURANCE REGARDING OUR SUPPORT FOR HIM.

3. KING HASSAN CURRENTLY FINDS HIMSELF AT ODDS WITH NEIGHBORS AND FACING INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES. RECENT ATTACKS ON POLICE POSTS, BOMB EXPLOSIONS, ETC., ARE SIGNS OF EFFERVESCENCE WHICH OBVIOUSLY PREOCCUPYING MOROCCANS (AS THIS IS BEING DRAFTED WE HAVE JUST HAD

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ANOTHER BOMB SCARE AT USIS). WHILE WE PRESUME PERPETRATORS MOULAY BOUAZZA, KHENIFRA AND GOULMINA INCIDENTS TRAINED AND ARMED BY LIBYANS, THERE ARE SUSPICIONS HERE RE EASE WITH WHICH DISSIDENTS HAVE CROSSED ALGERIAN TERRITORY IN ORDER ENTER MOROCCO. EXAMPLE IS STATEMENT OF KNOWLEDGEABLE ARAB DIPLOMAT WITH CLOSE PALACE CONNECTIONS, WHO INFORMS US THERE NO QUESTION BUT THAT ALGERIANS FACILITATED PASSAGE OF DISSIDENTS AND THAT PURPOSE WAS TO PUT PRESSURE ON MOROCCANS, PROBABLY OVER SPANISH SAHARA ISSUE. WE DO NOT NECESSARILY SHARE HIS VIEWS BUT HE SAYS BENHIMA WENT TO ALGERIA WITH LIST OF ALGERIANS WHO WERE INVOLVED, AND IT NOT CLEAR WHETHER HE GETTING SATISFACTION FROM ALGERIANS IN RESPONSE. WHETHER THESE OBSERVATIONS ACCURATE IS LESS IMPORTANT THAN FACT THEY PROBABLY REPRESENT CURRENT THINKING OF PALACE.

4. HASSAN ALSO HAVING TROUBLE WITH SPANIARDS OVER FISHING PROBLEM, AS WELL AS SPANISH SAHARA. HE HAS CHOSEN TO TAKE FORWARD POSITION ON BOTH MATTERS, AND SPANIARDS HAVE REACTED UNFAVORABLY. LOPEZ BRAVO ARRIVING TODAY TO DISCUSS FISHING PROBLEM. FOREIGN MINISTER ANGRY WITH SPANISH AMBASSADOR BECAUSE LATTER HAS LEADED INFORMATION TO IRRESPONSIBLE LOCAL JOURNALIST, AND SPANISH PRESS COMMENTS ON MOROCCAN POLICIES OBVIOUSLY GETTING UNDER LOCAL SKINS. KING ALSO IRRITATED BY UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY HE HAS RECEIVED LATELY IN FRENCH PRESS, AND BY FRENCH PERMISSIVENESS TOWARDS MOROCCAN EXILES, AND OF COURSE CONTINUES BE UPSET WITH ANTI- REGIME TACTICS OF LIBYANS. HE ALSO MUST BE AWARE THAT MAURITANIANS DO NOT APPROVE HIS POLICY ON SPANISH SAHARA AND SUSPECTS THEY AND ALGERIANS WORKING TOGETHER AGAINST HIM. THE OFFER OF TROOPS TO SYRIA WAS AN EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN MOROCCO' S POSITION AT LEAST WITH SOME OF THE ARABS.

5. THUS, HE FEELS ISOLATED EXTERNALLY, JUST AS TIME HE IS HAVING SERIOUS PROBLEMS INTERNALLY. ASIDE FROM CONTINUING UNIVERSITY STUDENT STRIKE, ACTIVITIES OF UNFP RADICALS, WHO REPORTEDLY INVOLVED IN PLACING OF BOMBS AT CONGEN AND USIS CASABLANCA AMONG OTHER PLACES, AND CONTINUED SNIPING AT HIM BY OLD OPPOSITION POLS, KING NOW HAS PROBLEM OF RURAL DISSIDENCE ON HIS HANDS. HERETOFORE, WHEN HAVING

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TROUBLE WITH URBAN RADICALS HE HAS AT LEAST BEEN ABLE TO

TAKE COMFORT FROM QUIESCENCE OF BERBER REGIONS, THE TRADITIONAL AREAS OF REBELLION. RECENT INCIDENTS IN MOULAY BOUAZZA, KHENIFRA AND GOULMIMA HAVE SHATTERED THIS ILLUSION AND APPOINTMENT OF COLONEL ARZAZ AS CHEF DE CERCLE AT KHENIFRA (RABAT 1286) SHOWS SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH KING VIEWS SITUATION THERE. BOMBING AND OTHER INCIDENTS AT OUJDA AND NADOR ARE INDICATION PROBLEM NOT CONFINED TO ATLAS MOUNTAINS, BUT TOUCHES OUTER FRINGES OF RIF. TO DATE, INFILTRATORS, WHO ARE BERBERS, HAVE FOUND NO SIGNIFICANT LOCAL TRIBAL SUPPORT, BUT THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE SOME EVENTUALLY.

6. INTERNAL EFFERVESCENCE AND EXTERNAL DISHARMONY INCREASE KING'S NEED FOR, AND APPREHENSIONS REGARDING, EXTERNAL SUPPORT. CURRENT GOM CONTACTS AND EXCHANGES WITH SOVIETS SHOULD PERHAPS BE READ IN THAT CONTEXT, BUT CERTAINLY VISIT OF BENHIMA TO WASHINGTON SHOULD. KING OBVIOUSLY GRATIFIED TO RECEIVE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (RABAT 1238) AND RAPID RESPONSE TO INVITATION TO BENHIMA INDICATES HIS INTEREST IN DIALOGUE WITH US. THEREFORE BELIEVE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION VISIT CAN PERFORM IS THAT OF REASSURING MOROCCANS OF OUR CONTINUED SUPPORT, NOT ONLY IN MATERIAL TERMS, BUT IN TERMS OF MORAL SUPPORT FOR MONARCHY.

7. AS IT IS DIFFICULT TO GIVE MAJOR TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF THIS SUPPORT AT TIME OF DECLINING AID AVAILABILITIES WE SHALL HAVE TO RELY MOSTLY ON COSMETICS. WE BELIEVE THERE ARE NUMBER OF STEPS WHICH WOULD HAVE USEFUL IMPACT. ONE IS TO OFFER TO ASSIST KING WITH PERSONAL PROTECTION PROBLEMS. GIVEN PROMINENT FRENCH ROLE IN THIS FIELD, WOULD NOT EXPECT OFFER BE TAKEN UP, BUT IT WOULD HAVE USEFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT. SECOND IS TO SCHEDULE MORE VISITS TO MOROCCO BY VIPS, WHETHER OR NOT THEY REALLY HAVE ANYTHING TO DISCUSS HERE. KING NEEDS CONSTANT EVIDENCE OF CONTINUING INTEREST OUR PART. THIRD IS TO RAISE QUESTION OF ROYAL VISIT TO US AGAIN AND TRY WORK OUT DATE. FOURTH IS TO ISSUE MEATY COMMUNIQUE AT CLOSE OF BENHIMA VISIT IN WHICH THERE IS LANGUAGE GIVING KING CREDIT FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES ON WORLD QUESTIONS. FIFTH IS TO ARRANGE FOR BENHIMA TO BE RECEIVED AT WHITE HOUSE.

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8. ABOVE CLEARED WITH AMBASSADOR.
PARKER

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